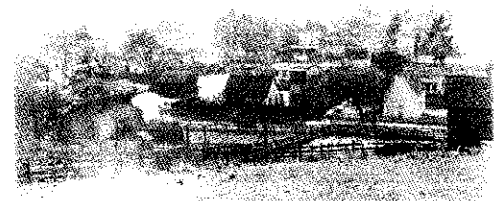
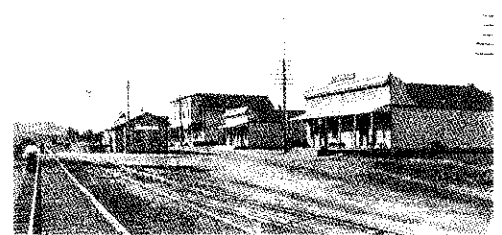
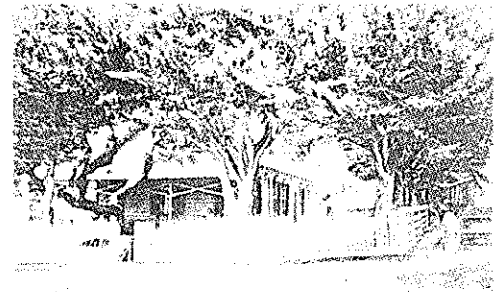
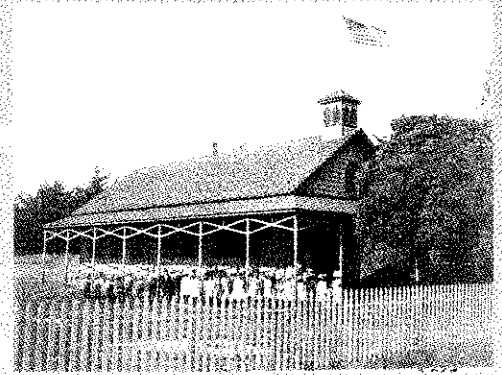


OLD TOWN CORDELIA

Improvement Project

Transportation for
Livable Communities
Concept Plan



September
24, 2004



STA



GATES +
ASSOCIATES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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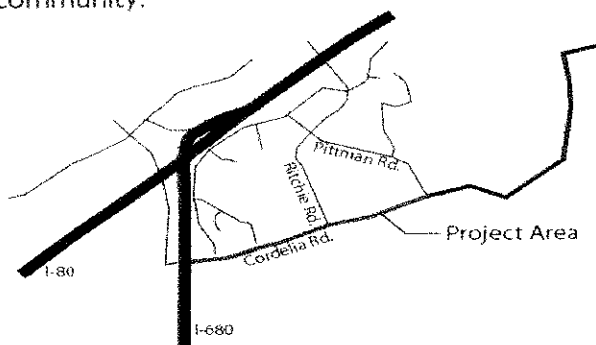
I. INTRODUCTION

The community of Old Town Cordelia is located in Solano County. It lies primarily within the unincorporated area of the County, with portions located within the City of Fairfield. It is roughly bounded by I-680 on the west, I-80 on the north, Pittman Road on the east, and Bridgeport Ave. on the south. Cordelia Road is the historic "Main Street" of the community, and is the focus of this plan.

Cordelia has a long history. It was a thriving old west town in the late 1800's. In 1936, a fire destroyed much of the town, but a number of historic structures remain, including Thompson's Corner on Cordelia Road at Ritchie Road, and a number of houses on Bridgeport Avenue. Presently, Cordelia is largely residential, with a few business, a fire station and a middle school. Throughout this time Cordelia has remained relatively undeveloped.

In recent years, residential development has occurred east, north and west of Cordelia. Because of major traffic congestion on nearby I-680/I-80, Cordelia Road has become a very heavily trafficked alternate route for commuters. Cordelia Road lacks pedestrian or bike facilities, making it unsafe and unfriendly for those who choose to walk or bike. Pedestrians and cyclists are forced to share the road with a high volume of vehicular through traffic.

With ongoing development of the areas around Cordelia and increasing traffic pressures, local residents became concerned about the state of the Cordelia Road corridor. They felt that without plan for development, the town would lose its identity as a unique, small rural community.



In response, the City of Fairfield formed the Cordelia Area Task Force (CATF), which was made up of a number of local residents. The CATF developed a report with key recommendations that they felt would encourage redevelopment consistent with the character of the historic town. Recommendations included preserving Old Town Cordelia by constructing a historical bike/walking path lined with historic markers and trees, erecting welcoming signs to mark the historic town and calm traffic, and to install other amenities such as lighting and benches.

Although this project is focused on the Cordelia Road corridor from Lopes Road to Pittman Road, several factors in the immediate and regional adjacent areas influence the study area. Cordelia, a relatively small and rural community, surrounded by increasing development, is a hub for existing and planned regional pedestrian and bicycle trails. This study analyzes elements that would help create a vibrant, pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and livable community with links to the regional trail systems. These improvements would benefit residents of the Old Town Cordelia as well as residents of the surrounding areas. Creating an integrated walking, transit and bike corridor will help to preserve Cordelia's history, revive Old Town as a village center for regional activities, address the needs of existing and anticipated residents, and provide pedestrian and cycle transit opportunities for both local and regional users.

The goal of this planning study is to define and plan a project that will be strongly supported by the local community, the affected agencies, and MTC, and which would therefore best serve the community and have the best opportunity to be constructed. This project should improve the pedestrian and bicycle function and safety of the Cordelia Road corridor, support alternative transportation links to surrounding locations, improve the appearance of the corridor, highlight the unique historic character of Old Town Cordelia and support development consistent with that character.

Process

Background

Old Town Cordelia residents have mobilized to improve the Cordelia Road corridor. The aging structures, pressures from new development and traffic-clogged streets from commuters escaping an overtaxed freeway system presented a need to define and vision their community's future. The community addressed the Fairfield City Council and Solano County Board of Supervisors regarding their concerns. In 2000, Fairfield formed the Cordelia Area Task Force (CATF). The CATF issued recommendations in May 2001. By recommending the creation of a pedestrian and bicycle friendly and safe street, they intended to highlight their identity as a unique, small rural community with historic value and to encourage development consistent with that identity. Based on the recommendations, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) provided the funding for this study through the Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) program. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed to oversee the study. The TAC includes Solano County Transportation Department and Environmental Management Department; City of Fairfield Public Works Department and Planning Department; Solano Transportation Authority (STA), MTC, Cordelia Homeowners Association (CHA) which represented the local stakeholders and residents, and the CATF. David Gates & Associates was selected by the RFP process to facilitate the development of the study.

Data Collection

CATF recommendations, Solano County and City of Fairfield standards, and historical and empirical data were incorporated into this study. Agencies and utility companies were consulted in evaluating feasibility. A walking tour was conducted with the TAC to discuss goals and objectives and review in the field potential opportunities and constraints. In a series of work sessions the TAC developed an Existing Conditions Report and approved a "Concept Plan".

Community Outreach

A community workshop was held at the Cordelia Fire Station to review the concept plan. The workshop was advertised in the local paper, posted at the site, and mailed to the Old Town's businesses and residents. Members of the CHA and the CATF acted as liaisons with the community, making personal contact with other residents, businesses and property owners. They obtained feedback and support for the concepts.

The community workshop participants discussed:

- Existing conditions (opportunities and constraints)
- Alternative alignment and trail concepts
- Desired imagery (street furniture, historical markers, trees, paving materials)
- Appropriateness to setting and desired character
- Relationship to adjacent uses

A variety of formats were used to engage the community and solicit input, from one-on-one interviews to children's sticker boards. A consensus was reached to proceed to the next level.

Concept Plan and Report

Based on input from the CATF and the community workshop an overall design concept for the Cordelia Road Corridor was developed. The concept plan includes an overall Design Plan illustrating path, traffic calming, lighting and historical marker locations and concepts for gateway signs, historical markers, street lamps, benches and other amenities. Enlarged design studies of key areas illustrate potential public improvements. Preliminary cost estimates for proposed public improvements including design fees were reviewed. The preferred Concept Plan was posted at Solano Transportation Authority for public view and distributed to the TAC for review and comment. The final plan is included in this document as the culmination of community and TAC efforts and in conformance with the recommendations outlined by the CATF. The final report will be presented to the Solano County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfield City Council for approval.

II. GOALS

The Proposed Project

The proposed project consists of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, safety improvements, and enhancements along Cordelia Road, including:

1. Installation of a path along the north side of Cordelia Road from Pittman Road to Lopes Road. The path should be at least five feet wide, or eight feet where shared with bicycles. Portions of the path may take the form of a sidewalk with curb and gutter, while other portions may take the form of a separate asphalt or concrete path.

Discussions with Caltrans will be needed regarding installation of the path under I-680 to ensure that the concept is feasible and acceptable to Caltrans. Coordination with utility companies will ensure that the proposed path location is compatible with existing utilities. The possible use of special treatment in texture or color to enhance the appearance of the path, particularly near Ritchie Road should be addressed. The purpose of the path is to enhance the atmosphere and walkability of Cordelia, as well as to provide a continuous connection for pedestrians between Pittman Road and Lopes Road for, while linking the community to adjacent communities and trails.

2. Installation of trees and possibly other landscaping along the path and along both sides of Cordelia Road. The recommended vegetation should be able to thrive without the need for maintenance or irrigation, after an initial maintenance period not to exceed three to five years. The selected vegetation should enhance the appearance of Cordelia, and the Cordelia Road/path corridor, and improve pedestrian safety by providing separation from vehicular traffic. Utility companies will be consulted to ensure that the proposed landscape locations are compatible with existing utilities.

3. Possible installation of historical markers, benches and other amenities adjacent to or near the path. "Welcome to Cordelia", "Old Town Cordelia" or other such unique signs could help to calm traffic as well as help to establish an identity for the area. Special paving at the corridor entries could help to calm traffic and indicate entry into a more pedestrian zone.

4. Any other amenities that would enhance the presence of Cordelia should be considered and addressed. These should include, at a minimum, the installation of old style metal post street lighting, preferably similar in style to ones previously used in Cordelia as shown in historical photographs.

In order to address the project elements listed above, Solano County (County) and the City of Fairfield (City) applied for and obtained a Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) planning grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The TLC program provides planning grants for planning projects that integrate walking, transit, and bike riding into the community design, and spur the compact development of housing, downtowns, and regional activity centers. The goal of the planning study is to define and plan a project which will be strongly supported by the local community, the affected agencies, and MTC, and which would therefore be very competitive for future cycles of TLC capital grants in order to permit the planned project to be constructed. The project would improve the alternative transportation options available along the Cordelia Road Corridor, linking with regional trail systems. It would improve the appearance of the Cordelia Road corridor, and increase its walkability and bike-ability. The project would also help to maintain and enhance the historic character of Cordelia, encouraging future developments and improvements that are compatible with the grain and scale of the community. The County is the lead agency on the project and is considered to be the project sponsor. The City is a project partner.

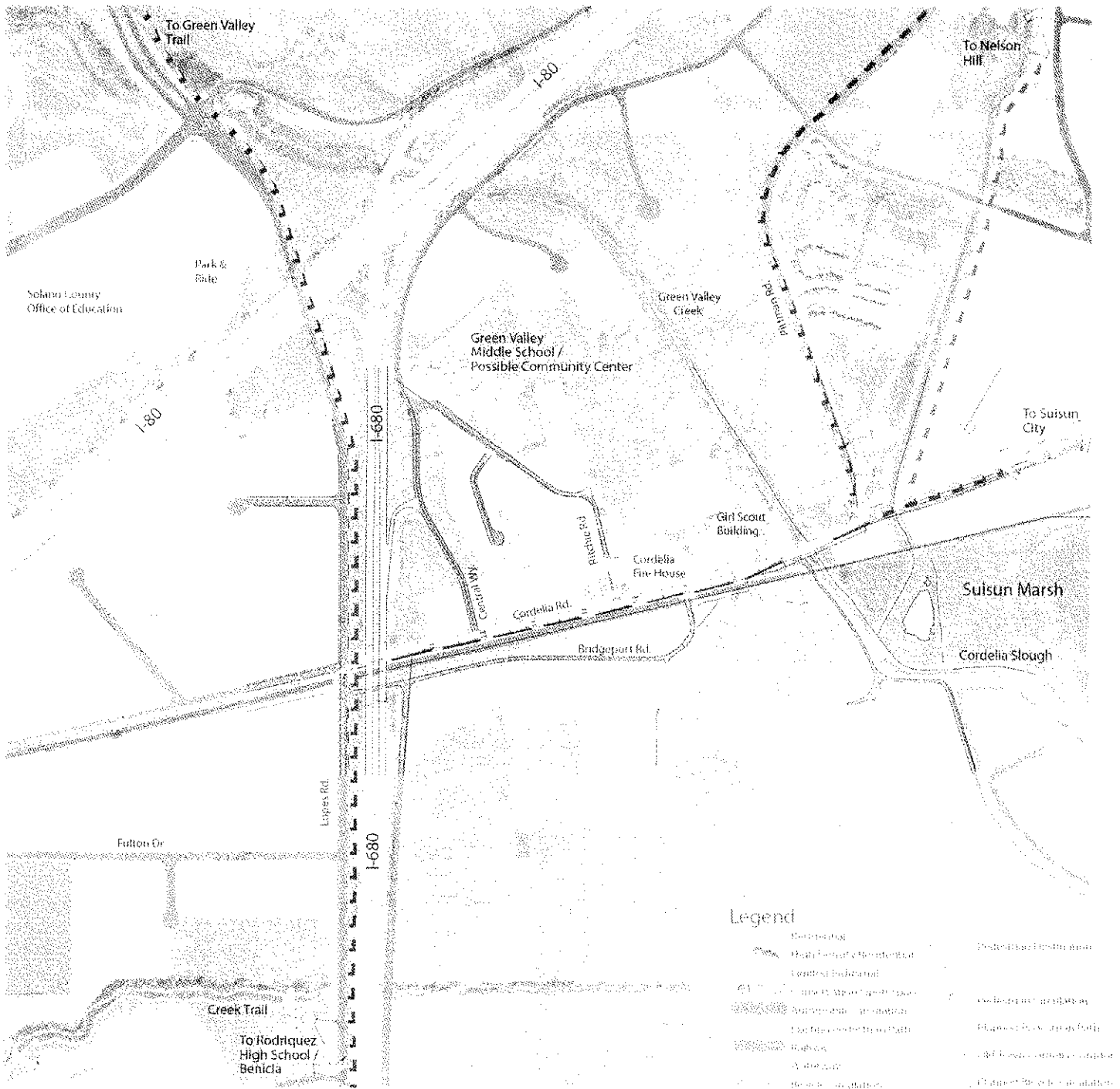
Fairfield/Cordelia Regional Trail System Map

The Fairfield/Cordelia Regional Trail System Map (below) shows that Cordelia is an important link to surrounding proposed and existing pedestrian/ bicycle trails.

Legend

	Existing	Proposed
Multi-use (No Horses)		
Bike Lanes		
Trail Heads		

Notes: The City of Fairfield makes no claims as to the safety of any trail features shown on this map. The purpose of this map is to identify potential trail facilities for funding and engineering. For more information, please contact the City of Fairfield Community Services Department at 425-7465.



Circulation Diagram

The Circulation Diagram above relates automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation to the project study area and adjacent land uses. A major circulation pattern is the automobile traffic that uses Cordelia Road as a "back road" to bypass heavy traffic along the I-680 and I-80 freeways. This heavy commuter traffic use creates an inhospitable environment in a community that lacks traffic calming measures, sidewalks, or crosswalks along a bare two-lane Cordelia Road. With the proposed improvements, pedestrians and cyclists could connect to trails and routes on both sides of the freeways, allowing for alternative transportation to schools, work, shopping and recreation. Traffic calming features would create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and identify an Old Town zone

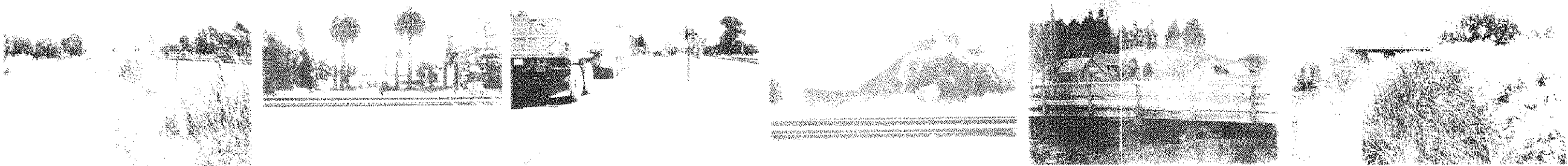
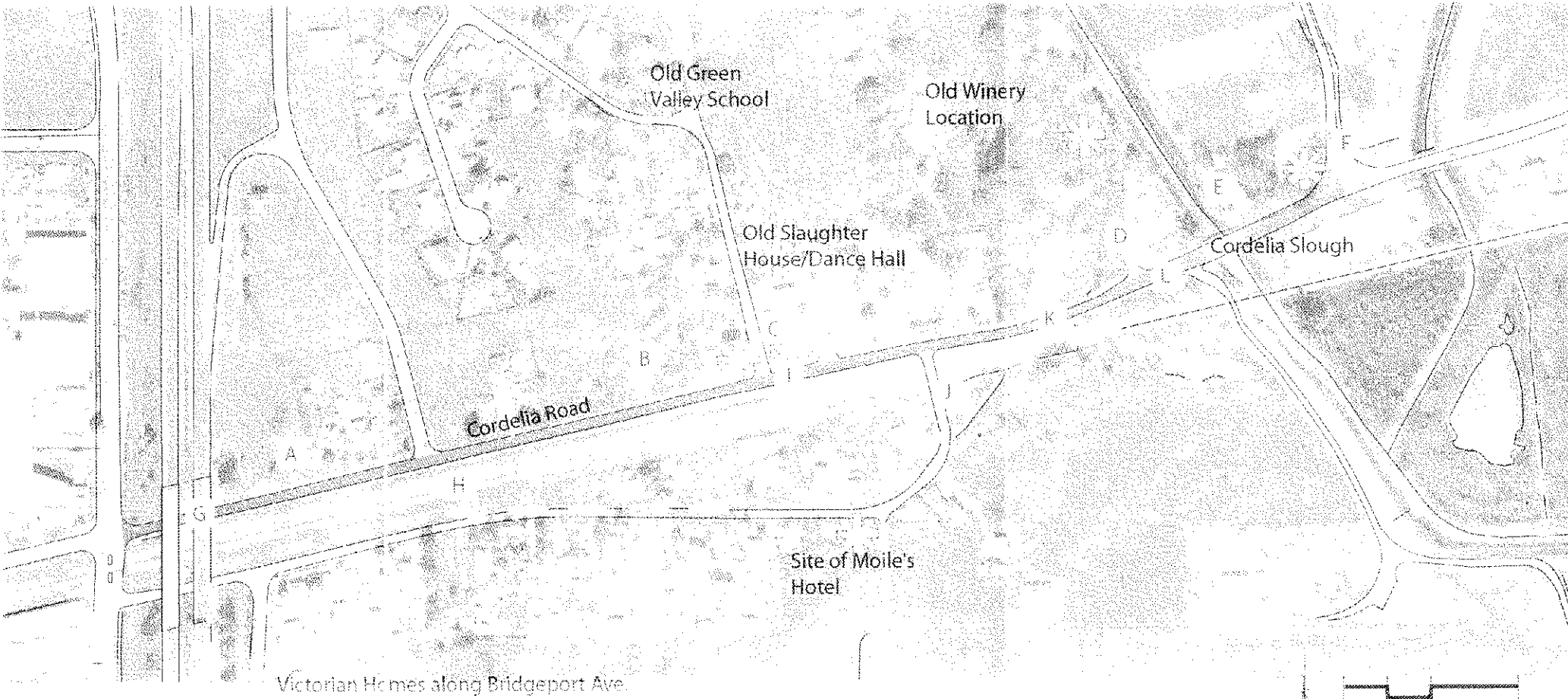
Character

In order to plan and design the site it is necessary to understand its unique qualities - what makes Cordelia such a special place. The photos illustrate existing and once existing conditions and address issues and forms relevant to the project. Pedestrian scale is appropriate to the site, and should enhance the development vision. The diagram identifies the location of historic buildings and historic sites in relation to the corridor.



A Typical residential frontage. A distinct rural character. B Thompson's Corner Historic character. No use separation between pedestrian/road/parking. C Cordelia Fire Station. Difficult pedestrian circulation. D Green valley Creek. Old winery site upstream. E Cordelia Hotel's historic character. F Nelson Hill & residential location for multi-use path to Nelson Hill.

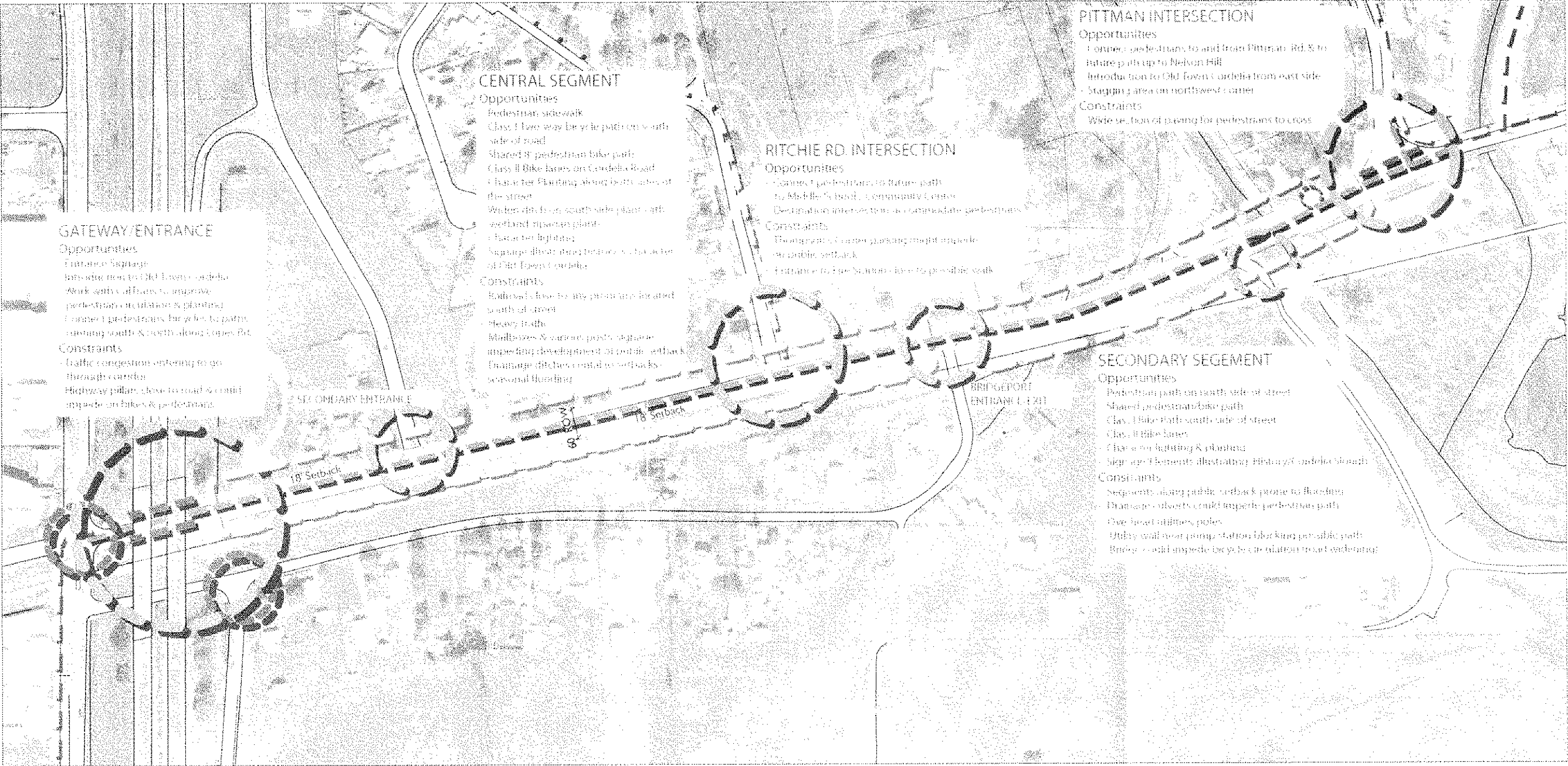
The town of Cordelia, founded by former ship Capt. Robert Waterman and named after his wife is a town rich with history. It was a thriving community in the late 1800's and includes a number of historical structures. Cordelia has a unique old pioneer history being the second oldest city in Solano County, and home to Solano's first winery and Pony Express. Cordelia Rd. (US 40) itself is designated a historic route. Cordelia's uniqueness is also due to the adjacent Cordelia Slough. South of Cordelia Rd two creeks confluence and create Cordelia Slough. Cordelia Slough, the place Waterman believed to be the best place for a town with facilities to ship farm products, is a place rich with lush vegetation and diverse wildlife. This area is rich with a unique and historical character yet is in danger of losing its distinct character. This stretch of Cordelia Road does little to support the character of historic Cordelia, and is a pedestrian environment dominated by automobiles rushing to avoid traffic jams.



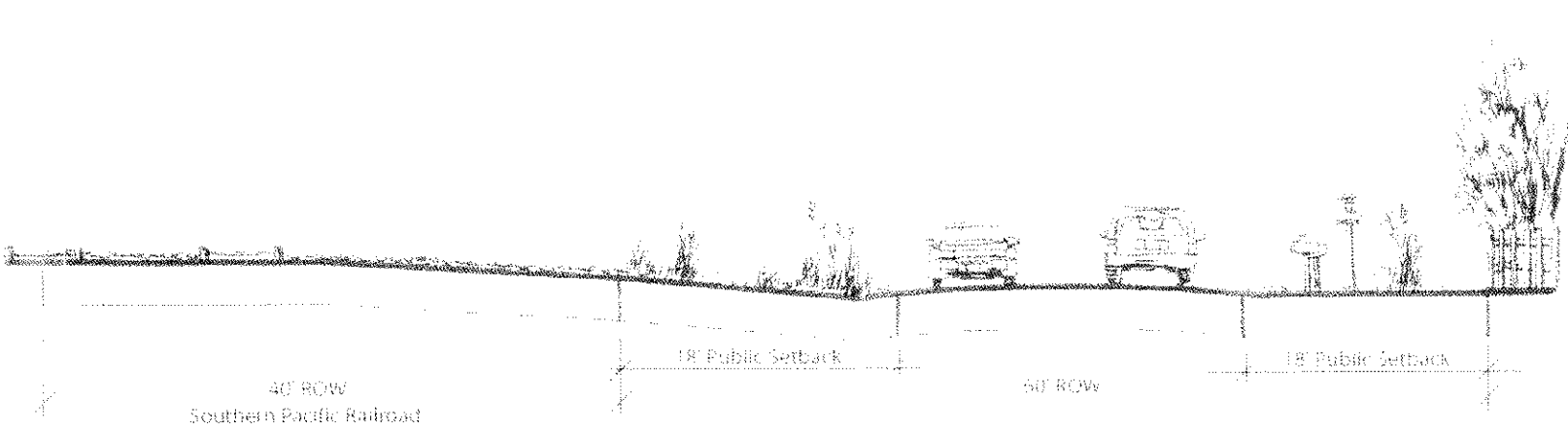
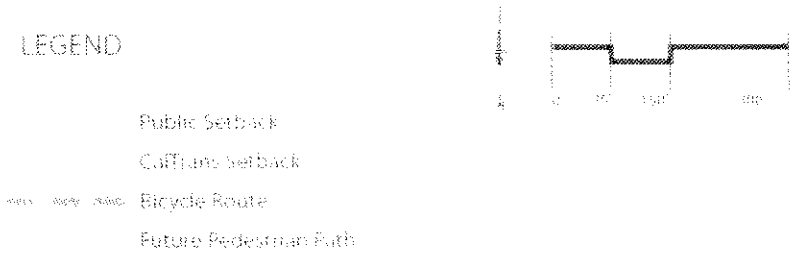
G Entrance into Old Town Cordelia. Drainage ditch with wetland vegetation. H Dunker House on Bridgeport Ave. Phoenix canariensis-historic planting. I Typical frontage next to railway. A lack of separation from road-railway-walking path. J Livery stable for Hall Hotel-Built in 1890. K Historic location of Green Valley Creek. L Green Valley Creek/Cordelia Slough. Wooden plank trestle bridge. M An area full of rich wetland planting & wildlife.

Opportunities & Constraints

This analysis lists opportunities and constraints for each segment along the project area. Each opportunity listed describes a possibility to do something at that point in the segment and each constraint listed describes a factor that could impede or be a problem for certain aspects of the project. This helps organize the site and outline the options of what can be done and where.



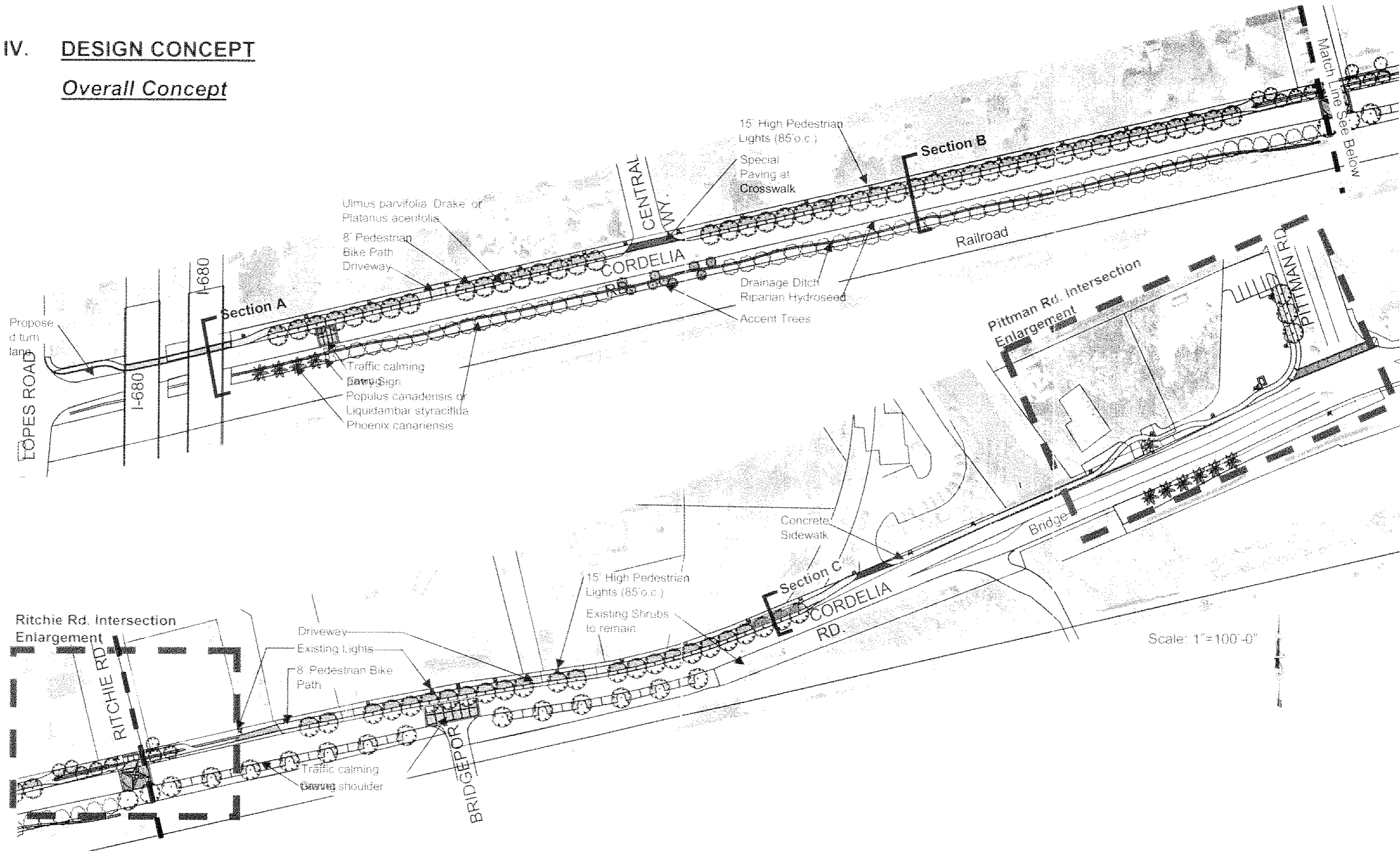
LEGEND



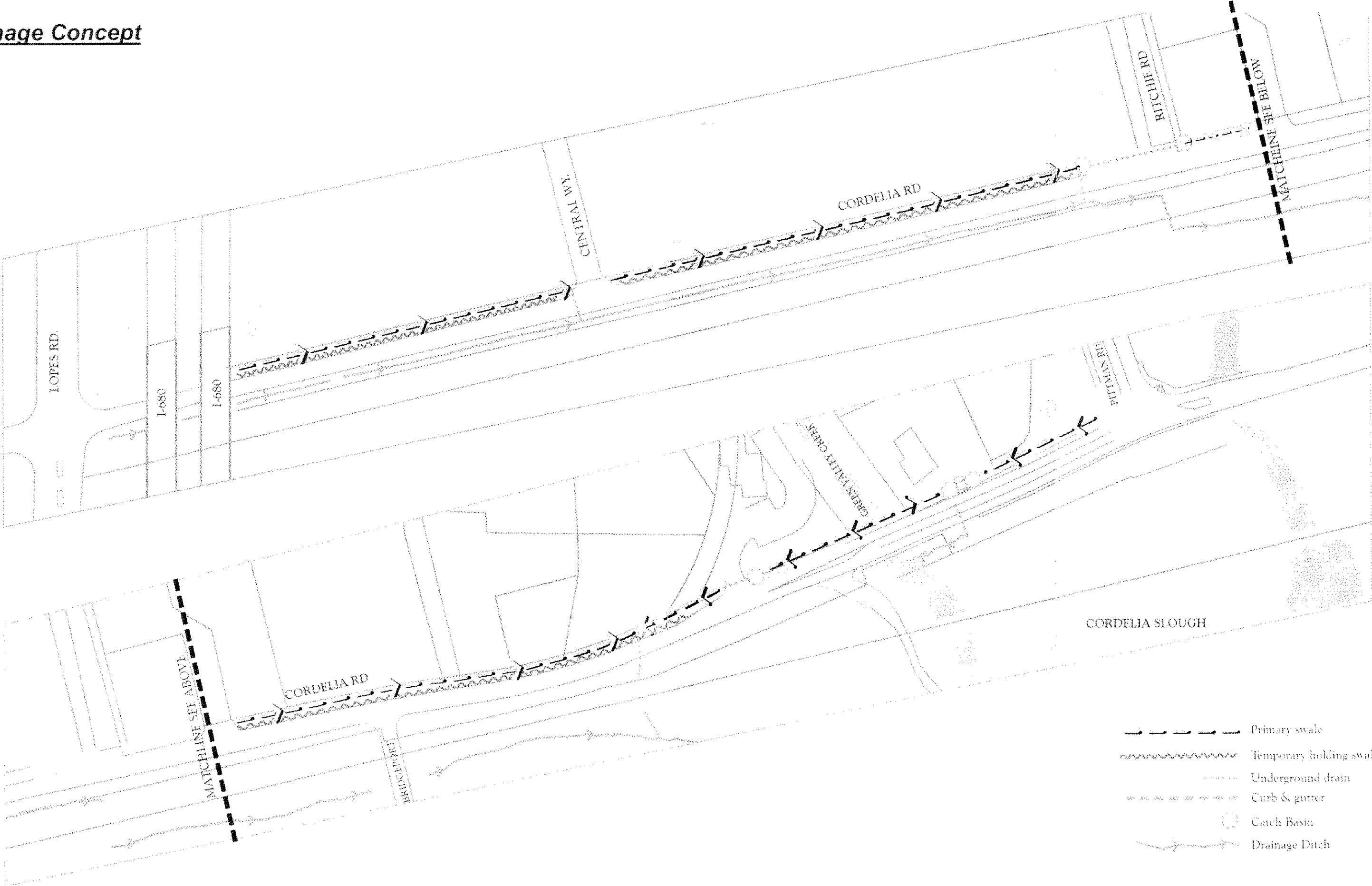
TYPICAL EXISTING ROAD SECTION
Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"

IV. DESIGN CONCEPT

Overall Concept

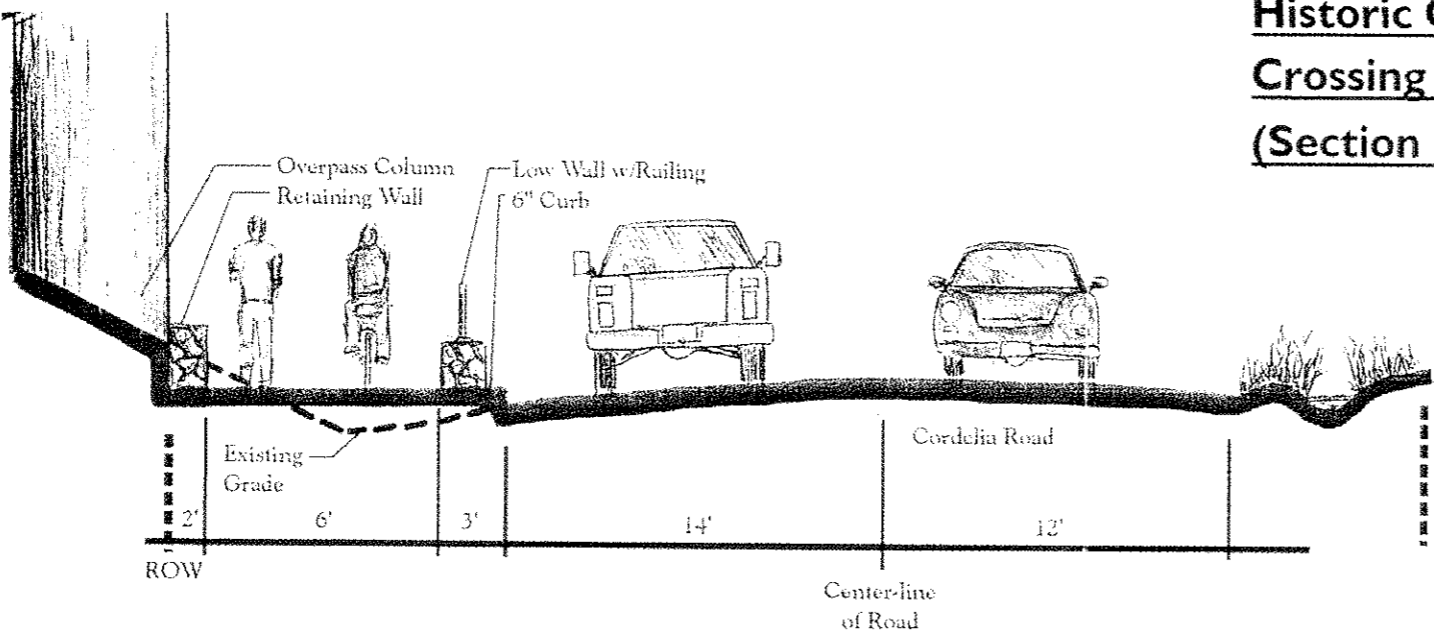


Drainage Concept

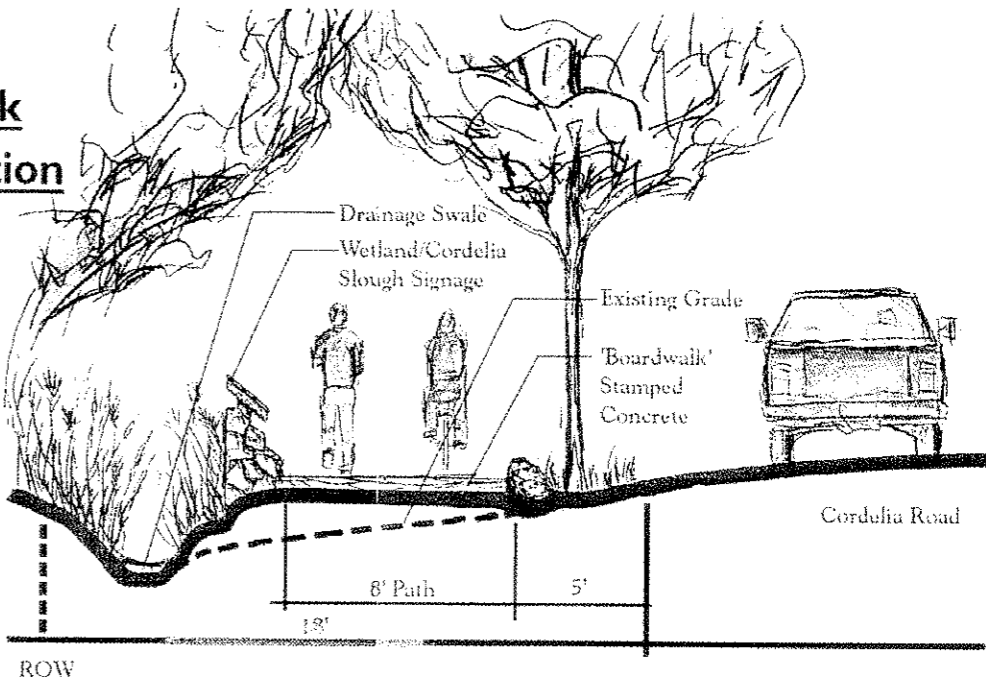


Street Sections

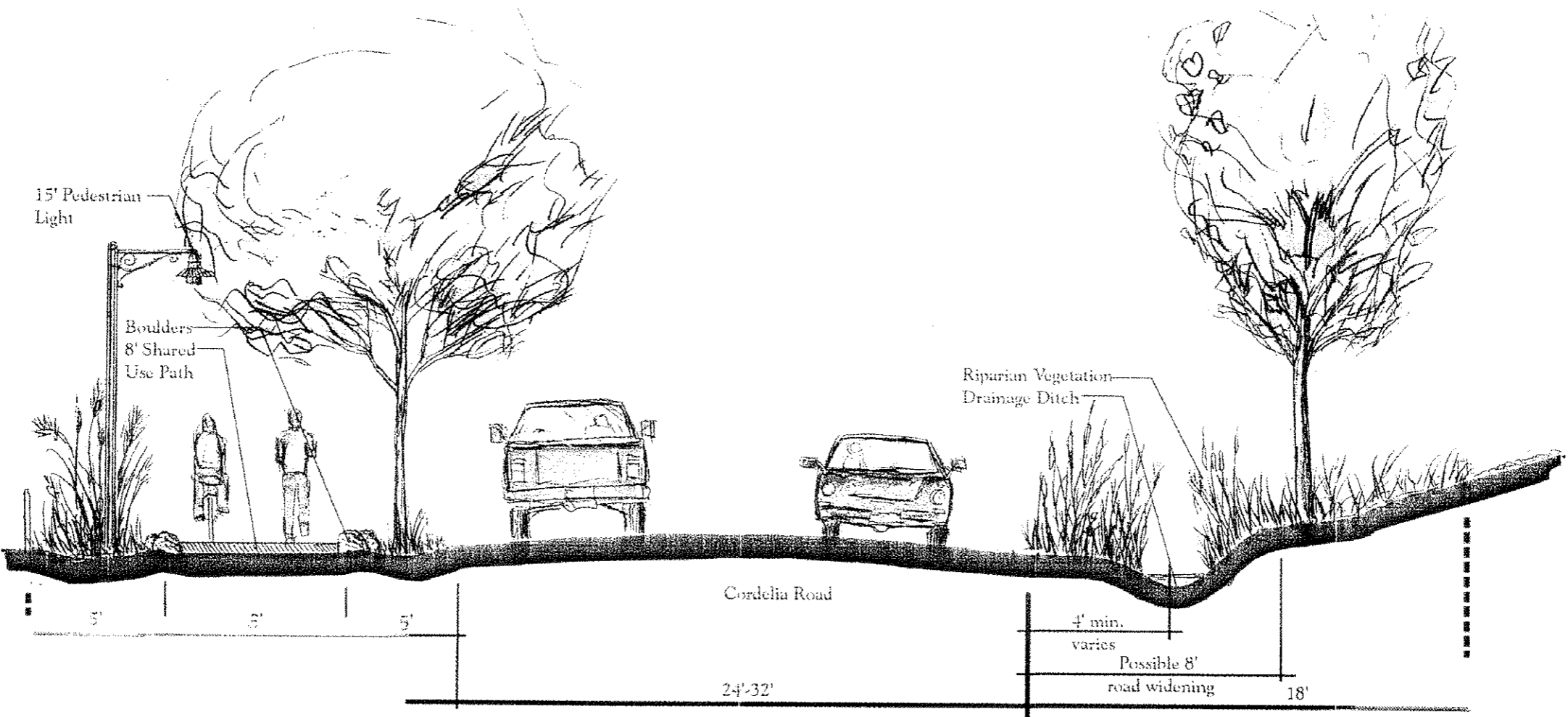
Overpass Section
(Section A)



Historic Creek
Crossing Section
(Section C)



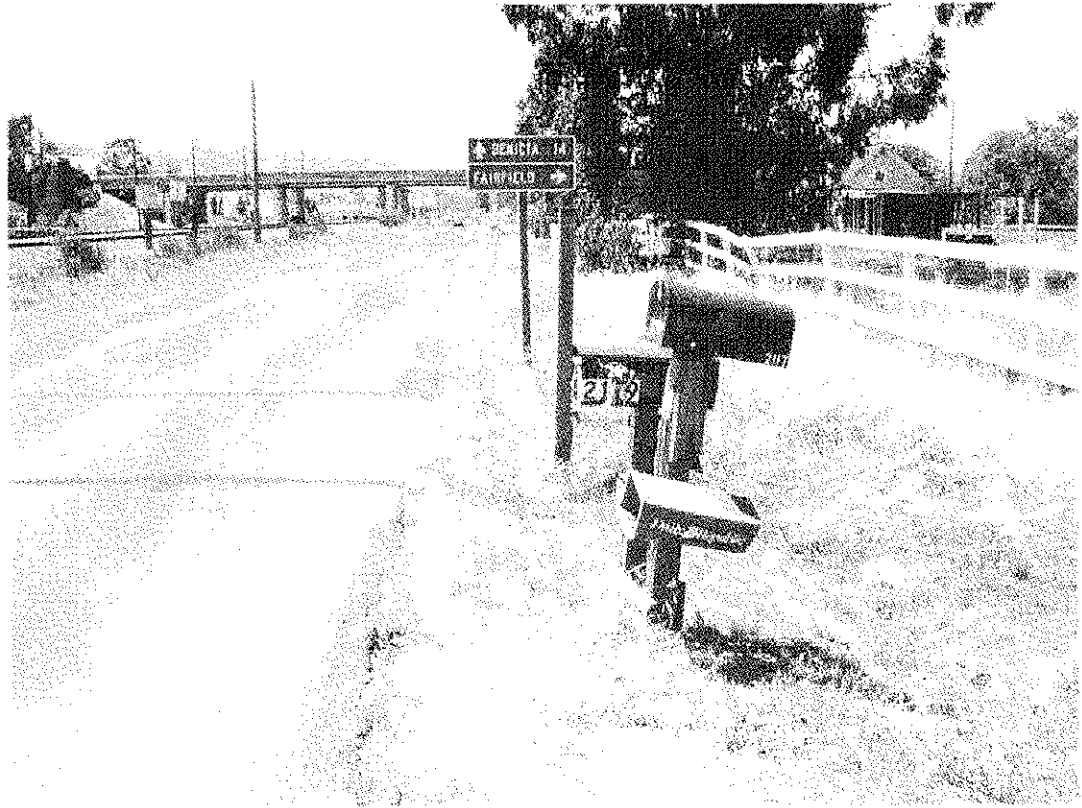
Typical Road Section
(Section B)



Typical Trail Section

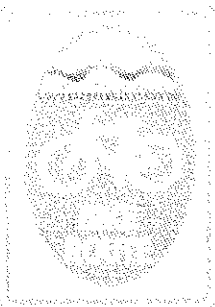
Before

- No place for pedestrian travel
- No edge for automobile travel

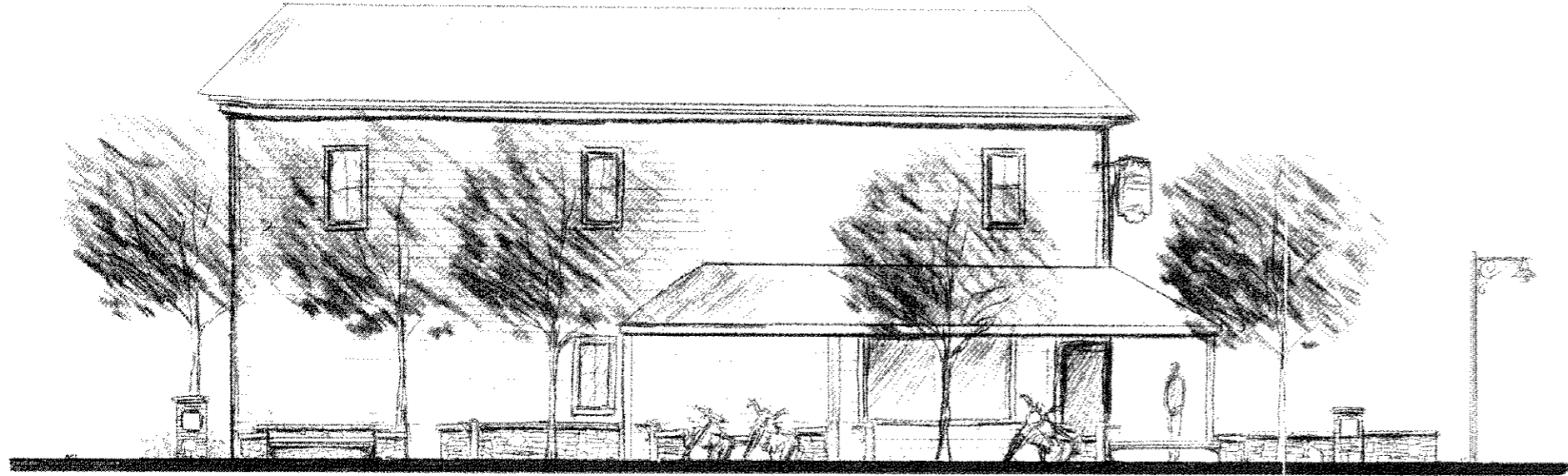
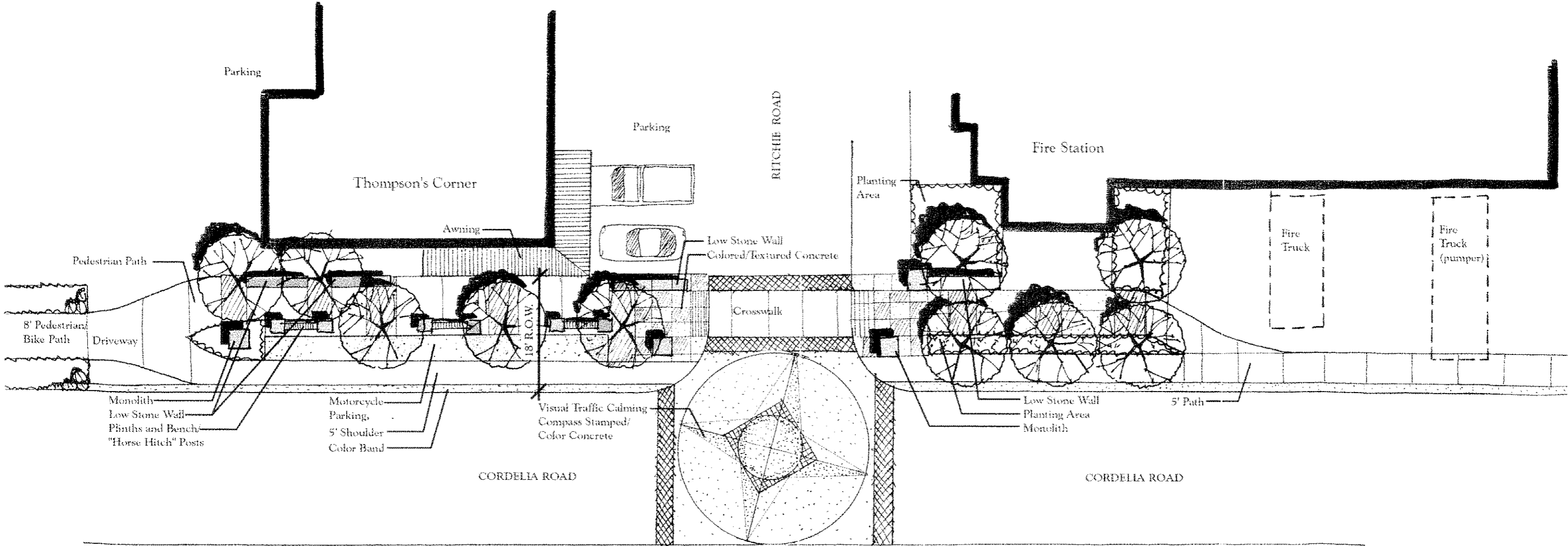


After

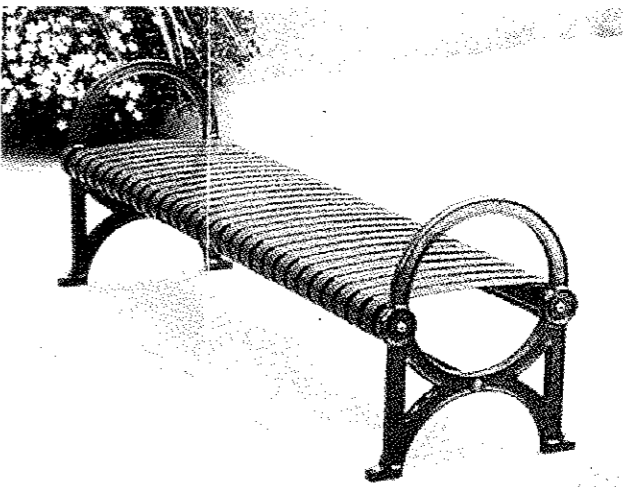
- 8' Shared bicycle/pedestrian path
- Path separated from autos by trees and boulders
- Traffic calming canopy of trees
- Pedestrian scale lighting
- Mailbox and sign consolidation



Ritchie Road Intersection

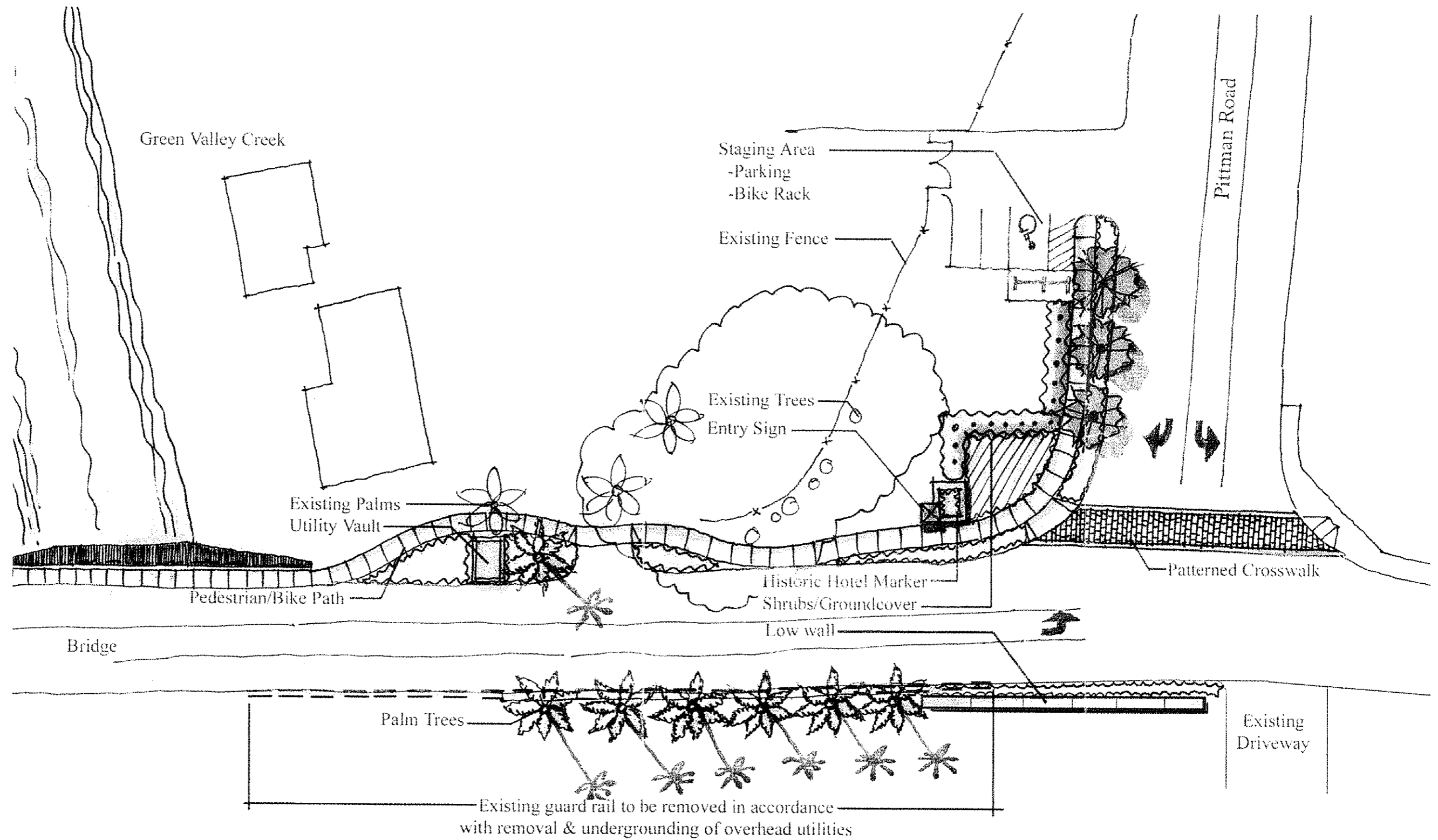


Thompson's Corner Elevation (w/stone benches)



Optional metal bench

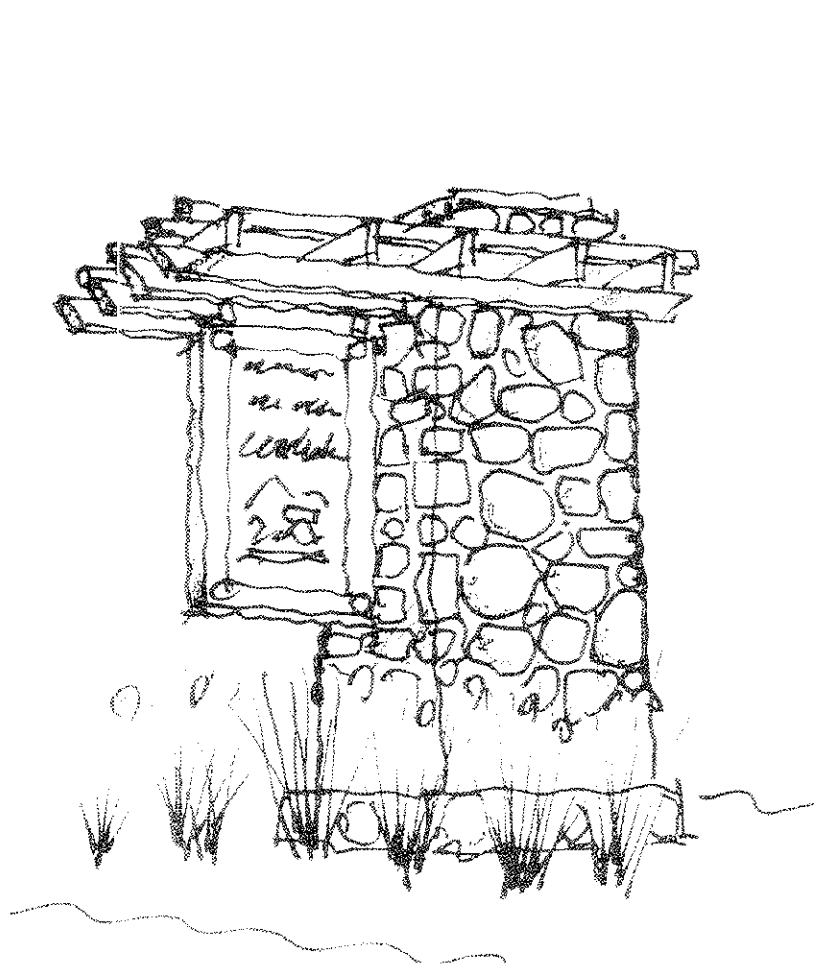
Pittman Road Intersection



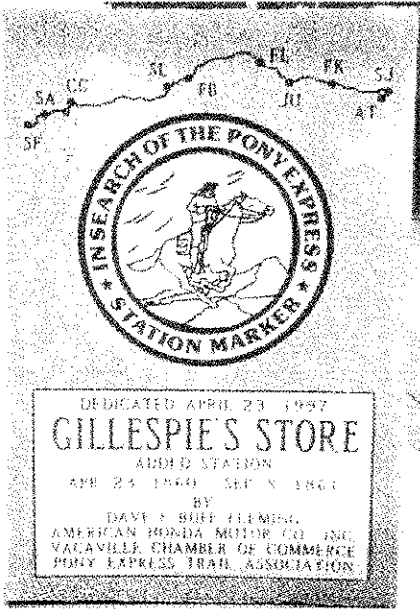
Entrance Concepts & Historical Markers



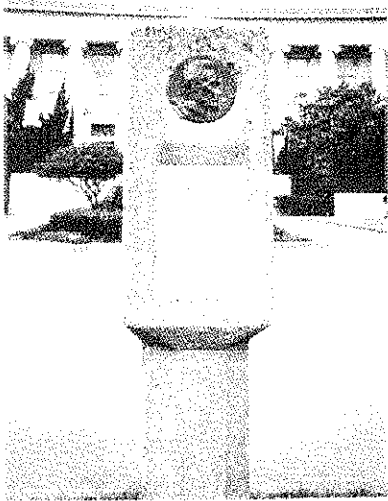
Perspective looking north-east near I-680



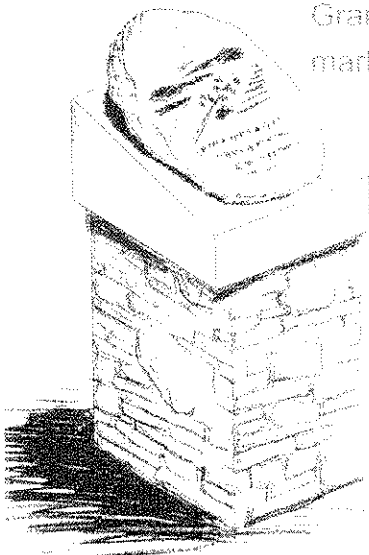
Entry sign near Pittman Rd. intersection



Pony Express Marker



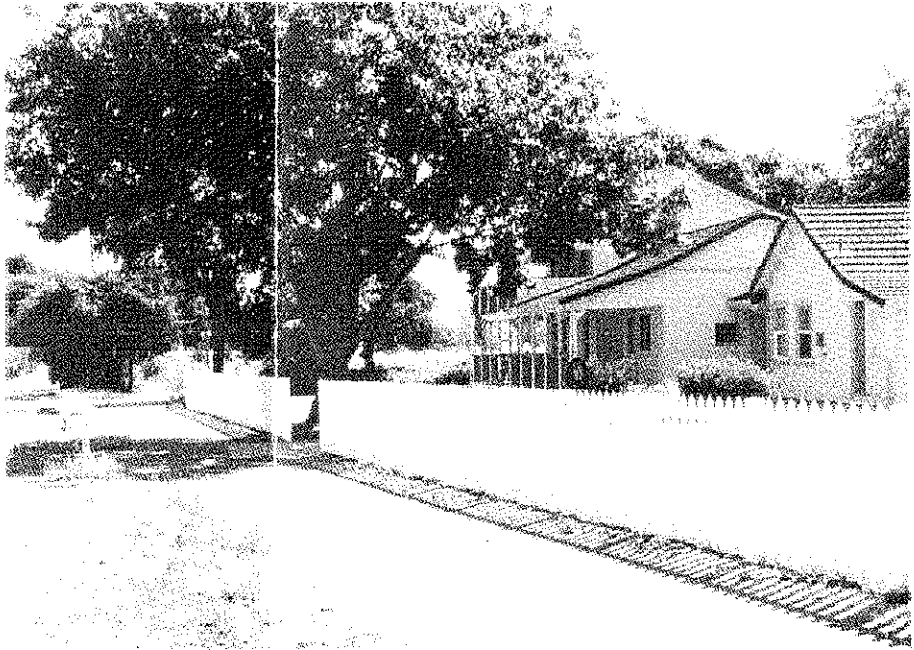
Lincoln Highway Marker



Cordelia Historic Marker

Granite Stone w/ engraved historic markings and information

Stone base to match entry sign character



Private fencing imagery

V. CONCLUSION

Community Commitment

Old Town Cordelia is a community with history and pride. The Cordelia Area Homeowners Association hosts the Heritage and Railroad Day, an event that attracts visitors from countywide to celebrate the Town's history and educate the greater community about Solano County history and the development of California and the West. The Cordelia Area Task Force has proven their ability to work together and their commitment to a better community. The CATF has come together in a community planning and visioning effort to define their goals and guide community improvements. The Community represented by the Solano County Transportation Department and Environmental Management Department; City of Fairfield Public Works Department and Planning Department; Solano Transportation Authority, residents, merchants and the Fire Department have committed time and effort to this project and to the ideas expressed in this document.

Community Safety

For its more than 9,000 residents, Cordelia Road is Old Town's main artery. As a historical "Main Street" it was designed to accommodate local traffic, but it is currently dominated by overflow vehicular, commuter traffic. The City of Fairfield's 2020 General Plan provides for up to 5,600 additional homes, which will generate greater traffic volumes and increase demand for safe pedestrian and bicycle access.

Locally a safe, bicycle and pedestrian friendly passageway in Old Town is necessary to recreate the main street and to collect and link destinations. The provision of a multi-use path will connect the surviving historical sites, existing single family developments of Cordelia Village, Southbrook & Vintage and multi-family Bridgeport Ranch to the Old Town, encourage compatible retail development, and link middle and high schools to the households which they serve. Traffic calming features would enhance the main street ambiance.

Regionally, a multi-use pedestrian path and bikeway in Old Town Cordelia is a major link in the Solano County Regional Trail System connecting bike lanes, routes and trails to Napa, Suisun City, Fairfield and Benicia. These linkages are equally valuable for the non-vehicular commuter as the recreationalist. They encourage alternate forms of transit

A Better Community

Jerry Bowen, a local historian, wrote, *"There is a pride and spirit in this island of the past that wants to preserve its heritage and historic buildings. The onslaught of rampant development may once again obliterate a very important piece of Solano County's heritage. But don't count the residents of Cordelia out yet. The spirit of the pioneers still holds firm and may once again save this very interesting and historic community for future generations."*

The individuals that make up the Old Town Community are determined to preserve and promote Cordelia as a livable place. The provision of an integrated walking, transit, and bike corridor into the community design will help to preserve the history of Cordelia and spur the appropriate redevelopment of Old Town property as a village center for regional activities, facilitate the needs of existing and anticipated housing, and provide pedestrian and cycle transit opportunities for the local and regional users.



Technical Advisory Committee Site Walk